United Nations ST/AI/2012/1

Secretariat

27 April 2012

Administrative instruction

Assignment grant

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, pursuant to section 4.2 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2009/4 and for the purpose of implementing the provisions of staff rule 7.14, hereby promulgates the following:

Section 1
General provisions

Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the assignment grant (the "grant") is to provide eligible staff members with a reasonable cash amount for relocation on initial appointment, assignment or transfer to a duty station. It is the total compensation payable by the Organization for costs incurred by the eligible staff member and his or her family members as a result of an appointment, assignment or transfer involving relocation, as well as any pre-departure expenses that the staff member may incur as a result.

Elements

1.2 The grant consists of:

(a) A daily subsistence allowance (DSA) portion, payable in accordance with the provisions and criteria detailed in section 2; and

(b) A lump-sum portion, payable in accordance with the provisions and criteria detailed in section 3.

The conditions of payment of each portion of the grant are summarized in annex I to the present instruction.

Eligibility

1.3 Staff members who are internationally recruited under staff rule 4.5 and who hold an appointment other than a temporary appointment shall be eligible for payment of the assignment grant, provided they meet the requirements set out in the present instruction.

1.4 Staff members who are internationally recruited pursuant to staff rule 4.5 and who hold a temporary appointment shall be eligible for payment of the DSA portion

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of the grant for themselves only, subject to meeting the requirements set out in the present instruction. The staff members shall not be eligible for payment of the lump-sum portion of the grant or the DSA portion in respect of their family members.

1.5 **An eligible staff member shall be entitled to payment of the grant when he or she has been authorized to proceed on travel involving relocation on initial appointment, assignment or transfer, and when the period of service at the new duty station is expected to be for at least one year.**

1.6 The grant shall not be paid to a staff member recruited from the area within commuting distance of the duty station unless he or she demonstrates that it was necessary to change accommodation as a direct consequence of the appointment with the Secretariat, for instance after moving out of a house formerly provided free of charge by his or her previous employer. Other accommodation changes within the area of commuting distance, and promotion or recruitment to the Professional category of a staff member previously serving in another category at the same duty station, shall not give rise to payment of the grant.

1.7 Pursuant to section 1.6 above, a staff member shall be eligible for payment of the grant when he or she has been authorized to proceed on travel involving relocation from beyond commuting distance and necessitating a change of accommodation, when the travel is within the same country.

1.8 When the assignment to a new duty station is for less than one year and the Secretary-General, under staff rule 3.7 (c) (ii), has decided to apply the post adjustment applicable to the duty station and related entitlements such as the assignment grant, the grant shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of section 6.2.

Categories of duty stations

1.9 The amount of the grant may vary depending upon the classification of the duty station to which a staff member is appointed or assigned, in accordance with section 3 and as shown in annex I to the present instruction. All duty stations are placed by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) in one of six categories of duty stations, i.e., H and A to E. The H category comprises headquarters duty stations and other duty stations having similar conditions of life and work. The A to E categories comprise all other duty stations, classified by order of difficulty of conditions of life and work. The categories of all duty stations may be accessed at present from: http://icsc.un.org/secretariat/hrpd.asp?include=mah.

Section 2
DSA portion

2.1 The DSA portion of the grant shall normally consist of subsistence allowance for 30 days:

(a) At the daily rate applicable at the duty station in respect of the staff member; and

(b) At half such daily rate in respect of each eligible family member for whom the staff member had an entitlement to travel expenses to the duty station at

the time of initial appointment, assignment or transfer to the duty station, and for whom such travel expenses have been paid by the Organization.

2.2 The rates mentioned in section 2.1 shall be the ones in effect in the duty station on the date of arrival at the duty station of the staff member and the staff member's eligible family member, as appropriate.

2.3 At duty stations other than those classified in the H category, the normal 30-day period may be extended up to a maximum of 90 days, in accordance with staff rule 7.14 (c) (ii). The extension of the DSA payment may be granted in the event that a staff member is obliged to make continued use of hotel accommodation for more than 30 days due to the lack of reasonable apartments or houses at the duty station. The amount of the grant during the extended period shall be up to 60 per cent of the prevailing DSA rate on the date of arrival at the duty station.

2.4 Only the DSA portion of the grant shall be payable to locally recruited staff members who, after temporarily being converted to the Field Service category, have been absent from their parent duty station for at least one year and return to the duty station to assume their duties.

DSA portion in respect of eligible family members

2.5 Entitlement to the DSA portion of the grant in respect of any eligible family member shall arise when the following conditions are met:

(a) The family member travels at United Nations expense, in compliance with the rules governing official travel of family members; and

(b) The family member arrives at the duty station at least six months prior to the date on which the staff member's service at the duty station is expected to end. This requirement may be waived in respect of dependent children attending an educational institution outside the duty station.

Computation and currency of payment

2.6 The DSA portion of the grant at each duty station shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of the administrative instruction on the system of daily subsistence allowance,[1] subject to the following adjustments:

(a) When a special DSA rate has been established for specified hotel(s) at a particular location, the special rate shall be payable only upon provision of a certification from the senior administrative officer concerned that the staff member or an eligible family member had no alternative but to stay for a number of days at that specified hotel, and upon presentation of hotel receipts. The remainder of the DSA portion of the grant shall be calculated on the basis of the regular DSA rate for the duty station;

(b) When the normal 30-day period has been exceptionally extended in accordance with section 2.3, the DSA portion of the grant for the period of the extension may not exceed 60 per cent of the applicable DSA rate.

[1] ST/AI/1998/3 of 23 January 1998, as amended by ST/AI/2003/9 of 7 January 2004 entitled "System of daily subsistence allowance", as may be further amended.

2.7 The DSA portion of the grant shall normally be paid in United States dollars, subject to the rules governing currency of payment of salaries and allowances.[2]

Section 3
Lump-sum portion

3.1 In addition to any amount of grant paid under section 2 above, a lump sum calculated on the basis of the staff member's net salary and, where appropriate, post adjustment at the duty station of assignment may be paid under the conditions established in the present instruction.

3.2 Entitlement to the lump-sum portion of the grant and its amount depend on the ICSC classification of the duty station according to conditions of life and work, the duration of the assignment, and the existence of an entitlement to payment of removal costs of personal effects and household goods under staff rule 7.16 ("Removal and non-removal").

Category H duty station

3.3 A staff member who is appointed or assigned to a category H duty station for one year or longer shall receive a lump-sum payment of one month's net salary and, where appropriate, post adjustment at the duty station of assignment, as defined in sections 3.9 and 3.10, provided that he or she does not exercise removal entitlement to that duty station.[3]

3.4 The lump-sum portion of the grant shall not be payable to locally recruited staff members who return to their parent duty station after an assignment during which they were temporarily converted to the Field Service category.

3.5 A staff member who is appointed or assigned to a category H duty station and who exercises his or her entitlement to full removal of household goods under staff rule 7.16 (b) shall not be entitled to payment of the lump-sum portion of the grant.

Category A to E duty stations

3.6 A staff member who is appointed or reassigned for one year or longer to a category A to E duty station, and has a removal entitlement, shall receive a lump-sum payment of one month's net salary and, where appropriate, post adjustment at the duty station of assignment, as defined in sections 3.9 and 3.10.

3.7 A staff member who is appointed or reassigned for one year or longer to a category A to E duty station, and does not have a removal entitlement, shall receive a lump-sum payment equivalent to:

(a) One month's net salary and, where appropriate, post adjustment at the duty station of assignment if the duration of the assignment is expected to be of one year or longer but less than three years; or

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[2] ST/AI/2001/1 of 8 February 2001, entitled "Currency and modalities of payment of salaries and allowances", as may be further amended.

[3] At category H duty stations, removal entitlement is normally paid in the case of assignment for a period of two years or longer, as provided by section 4.3 of ST/AI/2011/6 of 27 June 2011, entitled "Mobility and hardship scheme", as amended by ST/AI/2011/6/Amend.1 of 30 December 2011.

(b) Two months' net salary and, where appropriate, post adjustment at the duty station of assignment if the assignment is expected to be for three years or longer.

3.8 If the staff member has a removal entitlement and is appointed or assigned to a category A to E duty station, he or she will receive a lump-sum payment equivalent to only one month's net salary and, where appropriate, post adjustment at the duty station of assignment.

Computation

3.9 For staff in the Professional and higher categories and the Field Service category, the emoluments used for computation of the lump-sum portion of the grant shall consist of the staff member's net base salary and post adjustment at the duty station of appointment or assignment, at his or her grade and step on the date of appointment or reassignment. Eligible staff members with recognized dependants shall receive a lump sum based on the emoluments at the dependency rate, whether or not the dependants travel to the duty station.

3.10 For internationally recruited General Service staff, the emoluments used for computation of the lump-sum portion of the grant shall be calculated as follows:

(a) For staff members without recognized dependants, the lump-sum portion shall be determined on the basis of the net base salary at the grade and step of the staff member on the date of appointment or assignment, plus language allowance, if any;

(b) For staff members who are entitled to payment of a dependency allowance for a dependent spouse, the monthly amount of the allowance applicable at the duty station of appointment or reassignment shall be included in the computation of the lump-sum portion. If no dependency allowance is payable for the spouse, the monthly amount of the dependency allowance payable in respect of the first dependent child shall be included in the computation.

3.11 If an assignment of less than three years is extended to three years or longer, the second lump-sum payment shall be computed on the basis of the staff member's emoluments at the time the payment falls due.

Currency of payment

3.12 The lump-sum portion of the grant shall normally be paid in United States dollars, subject to the rules governing currency of payment of salaries and allowances (ST/AI/2001/1).

Section 4
Special conditions applicable when husband and wife are staff members

4.1 When a staff member is married to another staff member or to a staff member of another organization of the United Nations common system and each spouse travels on appointment, transfer or assignment at the expense of the Organization to the same duty station:

(a) Each staff member shall receive the DSA portion of the grant for himself or herself, computed in accordance with section 2;

(b) The DSA portion in respect of dependent children travelling to the duty station shall be paid to the staff member on whom they are recognized as being dependent;

(c) Only one lump sum shall be paid, normally to the higher graded spouse and on the basis of his or her emoluments.

4.2 When both spouses travel on appointment, transfer or assignment at the expense of the Organization to different duty stations:

(a) Each staff member shall receive the DSA portion of the grant for himself or herself, computed in accordance with section 2;

(b) The DSA portion in respect of dependent children travelling to one of the duty stations where their parents are assigned shall normally be paid to the parent on whom they are recognized as being dependent, unless the child accompanies the other parent and both staff members request that the DSA portion be paid to that other parent;

(c) Each staff member shall receive the lump-sum portion applicable to his or her situation, in accordance with section 3.

Section 5
Timing of payment of the grant

5.1 The DSA portion of the grant in respect of the staff member and the lump-sum portion are normally payable on the actual date of arrival at the duty station, or on the date of recruitment to an appointment giving rise to payment of the grant.

5.2 The DSA portion of the grant in respect of eligible family members is payable on the actual date of arrival of each family member at the duty station. In cases where the staff member requests that his or her eligible family members travel earlier than his or her arrival at the duty station, the DSA portion of the grant shall be payable as of the date of eligibility for the payment in respect of the eligible family members, i.e., on the arrival date of the staff member at the duty station.

Advance against lump-sum portion

5.3 An advance of 80 per cent of the lump-sum portion of the grant, as computed at the time the advance payment is made, may be paid up to three months in advance of travel of a staff member assigned or transferred to a new duty station.

5.4 No advance against the lump-sum portion may be made in the case of initial appointments.

5.5 When an advance is paid, the releasing office shall so notify the receiving office, which shall make the necessary adjustments upon the staff member's arrival at the new duty station.

Section 6
Adjustment/recovery

Return to the same duty station

6.1 When a change of official duty station or a new appointment involves a return to a place at which the staff member was previously stationed, and where an assignment grant had been paid, the full amount of the grant (composed of both the DSA and lump-sum portions, where applicable) shall be paid only when the staff member has been absent from that place for at least one year. In the case of a shorter absence, the amount payable shall normally be that proportion of the full grant that the completed months of absence bear to 12 months.

Assignment of less than one year

6.2 When the assignment to a new duty station is for less than one year and the Secretary-General has decided to pay post adjustment and related entitlements, including assignment grant, as provided in section 1.8, and pursuant to staff rule 3.7 (c) (ii):

(a) The DSA portion of the grant shall be paid in full;

(b) The lump-sum portion, where payable in accordance with section 3, shall be prorated in the proportion that the number of months of appointment bears to 12 months.

Should the appointment or assignment be subsequently extended to one year or longer at the same duty station, the staff member shall receive the balance of the lump-sum portion which would have been paid had the initial appointment been for one year or longer.

6.3 Pursuant to staff rule 7.10, staff members shall receive an appropriate daily subsistence allowance for periods of duty away from their official duty station, provided that such period does not exceed six months, or in the case of staff members assigned to a United Nations field mission from a headquarters duty station for a period not exceeding three months. Any extension of such assignment, in accordance with staff rule 4.8, shall result in a change of duty station and payment of the post adjustment and related entitlements, notwithstanding staff rule 3.7 (c). The change in duty station may also result in the payment of an assignment grant (both DSA and lump-sum portion, where applicable), provided the following conditions are met:

(a) The total expected period of service at the duty station, including the period during which the staff received the subsistence allowance, is at least 12 months;

(b) The extension occurs at least six months prior to the expected end of the appointment or assignment at the duty station.

However, when subsistence allowance has been paid for a period not exceeding six months, or in the case of staff members assigned to a United Nations field mission from a Headquarters duty station for a period not exceeding three months, and the assignment is extended to reach a total period of less than 12 months, including the period during which the staff received the subsistence allowance, the staff member

is not entitled to the DSA portion of the grant. Only the lump-sum portion of the grant shall be paid in accordance with sections 3 and 6.2 (b).

Reduction in period of service at the duty station

6.4 In cases where the staff member has not completed the period of service, for reasons as noted in section 6.7, in respect of which the assignment grant has been paid, the grant shall be adjusted proportionately and recovery made according to the provisions of section 6.6.

6.5 The DSA portion of the grant paid on arrival at the duty station shall normally not be recoverable.

6.6 The lump-sum portion of the grant shall be adjusted or recovered as follows when the staff member has not completed the period of service in respect of which the lump-sum portion of the assignment grant has been paid:

(a) When a one-month lump sum has been paid and the completed period of service at the duty station is less than one year, the lump-sum portion of the grant shall be prorated and recovered or adjusted in the proportion that the period of service at the duty station bears to one year. No recovery shall be made if the staff member completes his or her first year of service at the duty station;

(b) When a two-month lump sum has been paid and the completed period of service at the duty station is less than three years, the lump sum shall be adjusted/recovered as follows:

(i) If the completed period of service at the duty station is less than one year, the first month's lump sum shall be prorated and recovered/adjusted in the proportion that the period of service bears to the first year (12 months) of assignment. The second month's lump sum shall be recovered in full;

(ii) If the completed period of service at the duty station is one year or more but less than two years, there shall be no recovery in respect of the first month's lump sum, but the second month's lump sum shall be recovered in full;

(iii) If the completed period of service at the duty station is more than two years but less than three years, there shall be no recovery in respect of the first month's lump sum, but the second month's lump sum shall be prorated and recovered/adjusted in the proportion that the completed period of service in the third year of assignment (i.e., the period exceeding 24 months) bears to the third year (12 months) of assignment;

(iv) If the completed period of service at the duty station is three years or more, the lump sum shall not be recovered/adjusted.

The provisions of this section are summarized in annex II to the present instruction.

6.7 The Secretary-General may grant an exception to the provisions of section 6.6 for compelling and/or compassionate reasons (e.g., health, reduction of the duration of an appointment or assignment at the direction of the Organization, i.e., due to closure or restructuring of a department/office, or for other reasons beyond the control of the staff member). In such instances there shall be no prorating of any portion of the grant.

Section 7
Final provisions

7.1 The present instru on shall enter into force on 1 May 2012.

7.2 Administrative instruction ST/AI/2000/17 of 11 December 2000 is hereby abolished.

(*Signed*) Warren **Sach**
Officer-in-Charge
Department of Management

Annex I

Summary of the payment of the assignment grant by category of duty stations

DSA portion

	Category A-E duty stations	*Category H duty stations*
For both removal and non-removal cases	30 days' DSA plus 30 days' DSA at half the DSA rate for each eligible family member of internationally recruited staff members holding an appointment other than a temporary appointment for whom travel has been paid by the Organization	30 days' DSA plus 30 days' DSA at half the DSA rate for each eligible family member of internationally recruited staff members holding an appointment other than a temporary appointment for whom travel has been paid by the Organization

Plus
Lump-sum portion

	Category A-E duty stations	*Category H duty stations*
For non-removal cases only	One month's lump sum, for assignments of one year or more, but less than three years	One month's lump sum, for assignments of one year or more, subject to the provisions of the present instruction
For internationally recruited staff members holding an appointment other than a temporary appointment only	Two months' lump sum, for assignments that are expected to be of a duration of three years or more If an assignment of less than three years' duration is subsequently extended to three years or more, a second one-month lump sum is payable at the beginning of the third year	
For removal cases only	One month's lump sum	No lump sum

Annex II

Summary of arrangements for recovery/adjustment of advance payment of assignment grant due to reduction in period of service to the duty station

Amount of lump sum paid	*Period of completed service*	*Recovery/adjustment*
One month	Less than one year	On a 1-to-12 basis
One month	One year or more but less than two years	No recovery
Two months	Less than one year	On a 1-to-12 basis in respect of the first month and full recovery of the second month
Two months	One year or more but less than two years	No recovery in respect of the first month but full recovery of the second month
Two months	More than two years but less than three years	No recovery in respect of the first month and prorated recovery of the second month on a 1-to-12 basis